

LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS
March 25, 2014

PRESENT:

SAL LICATA, CHAIRMAN
DR VALERIE KEPNER, PH.D., VICE-CHAIRMAN
ANTHONY BALDO, TREASURER
ROSEMARY LOMBARDO, SECRETARY
DR JOHN KOCH, PH.D., ASST SECRETARY
ROBERT CHEPALONIS, MEMBER
PATRICK CONWAY, MEMBER

ATTORNEY JOSEPH BLAZOSEK, SOLICITOR

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

STANLEY STRELISH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FRED BROWN, MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR
RENEE CRAIG, HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR
MOHAMMED NAJIB, CONTROLLER
ROBB HENDERSON, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
LEE HORTON, OPERATIONS/ROAD SUPERVISOR
JOE ROSELLE, I.T. DIRECTOR
LOU URITZ, PROCUREMENT MANAGER
JOHN ALU, FISCAL OFFICER, SHARED RIDE
VINCE COVIELLO, MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR
TRACY KLINE, ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT
JAMES DARR, OPERATIONS MANAGER, SHARED RIDE

MEDIA:

DAVE BOHMAN- WNEP
STEVE MOCARSKY- TIMES LEADER

OTHERS:

LINDA SLATER, CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
AMANDA- PTAC
ROBERT GRABOSKY- PTAC
PAUL JASON, JUSTIN DAVIS, RICH MCNEIL - LCTA BUS DRIVERS

1. Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman, Mr. Licata welcomed everyone and invited those present to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call: The following Board members were present for the meeting: Mr. Baldo, Mr. Chepalonis, Mr. Conway, Dr. Kepner, Dr. Koch, Ms. Lombardo and Mr. Licata.

3. Public Comment:

Mr. Licata then invited comments from anyone in the audience.

Justin Davis, LCTA Driver and Safety Committee member, asked the board on behalf of the committee to consider hiring spotters for the intermodal. He distributed an informational piece from the CDL handbook.

Mr. Licata replied saying it was previously discussed and is on the agenda for today's meeting.

Robert Grabosky, PTAC, questioned the need for spotters with a security guard present at the intermodal. Mr. Strelish stated that there is a differential between the security guards and spotters. Mr. Licata said the spotters are there to protect our passengers riding the bus.

Amanda, PTAC, asked if weekend/evening service could be added as she is unable to get to work. Mr. Licata responded saying that the board is aware of the issue but it was not economically feasible at the present time. Mr. Strelish noted it would be several million dollar decision. Dr. Kepner stated that she has not given up hope but there are financial constraints. Mr. Licata agreed and stated that it is not an impossibility.

4. Approval of Minutes: February 19th, March 6th, corrected January 14, 2014

Chairman, Mr. Licata asked for approval of the minutes from the February 19th, March 6th and corrected January 14, 2014 meeting and asked if anyone had questions on the minutes.

With no questions on the minutes, a motion to approve was made by Mr. Chepalonis and seconded by Dr. Koch. Motion carried.

5. Accounts Payable Checks: February, 2014

After review of the Accounts Payable Checks for the month of February, 2014, with no one having questions on the Accounts Payable Checks, motion to approve was made by Dr. Kepner and seconded by Mr. Chepalonis. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote of the Board.

6. Financial Statements: December, 2013 and January, 2014

Mr. Licata asked for a motion to accept the financial statement
Upon review of the Financial Statement for the months of December 2013 and January, 2014 a motion to approve the Financial Statements was made by Ms. Lombardo and seconded by Mr. Baldo. Motion carried through a unanimous roll call vote of the Board.

7. Chairman's Report: Mr. Licata

Mr. Licata did not have anything to report at this time.

8. Solicitor's Report: Attorney Joseph Blazosek

Attorney Blazosek noted the Board went into an Executive session from 3:21 P.M. until 4:08 P.M.

During this time Ms. Craig, Human Resource Director, and Mr. Strelish updated the Board on various personnel matters some of which will be brought up later in the meeting.

Also conveyed by Mr. Blazosek was the progress made with the Teamsters Union 401 and asked for a motion after his report to accept the contract between L.C.T.A. and the Shared Ride van drivers. He noted John Humko is the local representative for the bargaining unit. Mr. Blazosek stated we have been notified by Teamsters that a ratification vote was held on March 25th at the Shared Ride facility. The letter said that the members voted overwhelmingly to accept the proposed agreement which is valid from January 1st 2014 through December 31st 2016. The three year contract contains changes to pensions and benefits as well as a 2, 2 ½ and 3 percent yearly increase. The 2014 increase will be retroactive to January 1st.

Mr. Blazosek recommended that the board approve the contract. He noted that L.C.T.A. honored the balance of the Teamsters contract with the county and this was the first time an agreement was made with the L.C.T.A.

Mr. Blazosek stated a conference was held earlier this morning with a hearing officer and Penn Dot Representatives to reconsider the funding adjustment. Mr. Blazosek, Mr. Licata and Mr. Strelish were in attendance. There were no further developments at this time and an updated status will be given in 30-days.

Also, Mr. Blazosek made the board aware that the L.C.T.A. continues to cooperate and provide information to the Grand Jury and noted that both he and the board are aware that this has caused additional staff time and effort to be expended.

Mr. Licata, Chairman, asked for motion to ratify the contract with the Teamsters Union. The motion was made by Mr. Conway and seconded by Mr. Chepalonis. A roll call of the Board resulted in all affirmative votes accepting the contract.

9. Executive Director's Report: Mr. Stanley Strelish

Information Items:

A. Ridership – February, 2014

Mr. Strelish reported the ridership for the month of February, 2014 was 90,371.

B. (2) RFPs for the Shared Ride subcontractor providing services for Summer Transport and MATP. Mr. Strelish stated that it was a reflection of last years' RFP with the dates being changed.

Action Items:

Mr. Strelish asked the board to consider making a motion to approve the following items:

Worker's Compensation Proposal from H.A.R.I.E.- with a renewal premium of- \$428,208. Motion to approve was made by Dr. Kepner and seconded by Ms. Lombardo. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Approve a renewal quote from Evanston Insurance Company for Excess Flood coverage (effective 4/2/14) at an annual premium of \$21,025; Terrorism- \$3,000. He noted the premium decreased by approximately \$1,000. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Chepalonis and seconded by Dr. Koch. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Final approval of six staff members from Fixed Route and Shared Ride to attend the Annual PPTA Conference held in Lancaster, PA on April 23-25, 2014 at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.00. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Chepalonis and seconded by Ms. Lombardo. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Share cost with Martz for the purchase of an Intermodal Automatic Door Entrance and vestibule at a total cost of \$21,150, with the LCTA share at \$10,575. Mr. Strelish noted that 3 proposals were sought by Procurement Manager, Lou Uritz. Mr. Licata asked if the city was contacted in regards to who is responsible for city owned building. Mr. Strelish said he would work with Martz and contact city officials to see if we could be reimbursed. He said it is necessary for the safety and convenience of disabled passengers of both L.C.T.A. and Martz. Dr. Kepner noted that it has been asked how it passed inspection. She continued to say that it has been a concern of Riders and PTAC but the city does not respond to the major safety concerns of the intermodal building. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Lombardo and seconded by Mr. Baldo. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Mr. Baldo was excused at this time to attend a prior commitment.

Penn Dot recommended GFI system upgrade at a cost of \$21,725. It was noted that the original computer is from 2005. Motion to approve was made by Dr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Chepalonis. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Approval of newly written Procurement Manual by Lou Uritz, following a recommendation made in the triennial review to revise the current outdated manual. Dr. Kepner asked Mr. Uritz how he went about writing the manual. Mr. Uritz explained that he based the manual on FTA Procurement Policy Regulations along with recommendations from Penn Dot. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Chepalonis and seconded by Mr. Conway. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Written agreement between Colts and LCTA for STEP services, revised by Mr. John Alu. Motion to approve was made by Dr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Chepalonis. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Approval to send Mr. Robert Lawton, County Manager, a letter requesting the funds allocated to L.C.T.A. for the fiscal year 2013-2014. Mr. Strelish said that a payment of \$242,000 was due November 1st of 2013 and it has not been received to date. He pointed out that the 2nd payment of approximately \$242,000 is due by May 1st 2014. Dr. Kepner suggested that the possible consequences from Penn Dot be mentioned. Motion to approve was made by Dr. Kepner and seconded by Mr. Chepalonis. Motion carried unanimously through a roll call of the Board.

Department Supervisor Reports:

A. Operations Supervisor, Mr. Robb Henderson

Operations Supervisor, Mr. Henderson, mentioned that a letter was sent by the Safety Committee to the Labor Building regarding dangerous driving and parking issues. He hoped the letter would address the situation.

B. Maintenance Supervisor, Mr. Fred Brown

Maintenance Supervisor Mr. Brown reported the maintenance department was in the process of transitioning from winter to summer. He thanked his supervisors and department for their cooperation

over the challenging winter months and for putting in extra hours to maintain the L.C.T.A., Van Service and their property in Hazleton. They used 2 skids of ice melt and 12 loads of salt.

C. Shared Ride Division Operations Manager, Mr. James Darr

Mr. Darr stated that van drivers completed training at LCCC and it was well received.

10. Operations/Ridership Committee – Dr. Valerie Kepner, Ph.D., Chairperson

Dr. Kepner relayed that a meeting was held between herself, board members Mr. Chepalonis and Mr. Halsor, along with L.C.T.A. employees Robb Henderson, Stan Strelish and Joe Roselle.

They discussed route changes, snow routes and related issues. She stated that at the last ridership committee meeting the meeting for May was moved to the 2nd Tuesday, May 13th, as not to conflict with the L.C.T.A. Board Meeting. She announced that the new schedules will be posted in the buses on April 1st for route changes set to begin on April 28th. Mr. Strelish mentioned that they would also be on the website. Some of the changes were discussed with Robb Henderson, Operations Supervisor. Mr. Henderson said that the number of trips was not changed, just the times rearranged. There were no times cut except for one on the #3. Also, the #5 has changed and will be servicing Geisinger. Dr. Kepner asked for clarification on vague descriptions. I.T. Director, Joe Roselle said that he could put a listing of changes on the front page of the website and put up the new schedules as soon as they are ready. He can also keep the old schedules on the site and add any information that is given to him. Paul Jason, Union President, asked Mr. Henderson if the schedules would be ready for April 1st. He also said that riders cannot have two sets of schedules to read, it would be too confusing. Renee Craig, Human Resource Director suggested a notice be posted on the bus showing the changes and the effective date.

Dr. Kepner said that some people can't get through on the bus time line. Mr. Roselle noted that it may be resolved once Verizon completes their update.

11. Personnel Committee- Mr. Robert Chepalonis

Mr. Chepalonis made the following motions for hiring of employees:

Deborah Dennis, Full-time MATP Coordinator effective 02/24/2014 – correction to annual salary of \$22,239.74 to correct amount of \$22,329.74. Motion was seconded by Dr. Kepner. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Latiqua Holley, Part-time Bus Operator at contract rate, effective 3/31/14

Motion was seconded by Dr. Koch. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve filling one (1) maintenance position by promoting James Konsavage from Shared Ride, effective 3/31/14.

Motion was seconded by Ms. Lombardo. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve adding one (1) full-time maintenance position

Motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve hiring nine (9) full-time Van Drivers (replacing previous drivers)

Motion was seconded by Ms. Lombardo. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve filling one part-time dispatcher position

Motion was seconded by Dr. Kepner. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve adding position of one (1) full-time Dispatch/Utility Person at a starting salary of \$27,945.21
Motion was seconded by Mr. Conway. Motion carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

Approve adding (3) full-time Spotter positions and (2) part-time bus spotters as needed
Motion was seconded by Mr. Conway.

Dr. Kepner asked about a dollar amount regarding the spotter positions. It was stated that the pay rate would be approximately \$15 an hour. Dr. Kepner said she is completely in favor of hiring the spotters. She mentioned the financial difficulties of the Authority and asked if she could see some sort of summary statement showing the financial impact. She questioned how it would be funded going forward saying that the surplus will not be there forever. There is a possibility of having to cut some bus service. Also, once the spotters are in place, there is no way to go back and remove them.

Mr. Licata stated that it is only for a 3 ½ month period until the new budget is prepared.

Mr. Strelish stressed that it is a dangerous situation and we cannot compromise safety.

Mr. Chepalonis calculated that it would cost approximately 160,000 per year.

Dr. Kepner questioned what she was voting for and noted that the Controller, Mr. Najib, did not agree with the numbers.

Mr. Blazosek said that we were not hiring anyone today just starting the process and we can see how the numbers work out. He went on to say that we can't advertise or plan without creating the position. Today's vote is to add the positions but the board has the final say of how they will be filled.

Motion then carried through a roll call vote of the Board.

12. Old Business

Dr. Kepner asked why the advertising revenue was much higher than the budgeted amount. Mr. Najib, L.C.T.A. Controller, explained that we are only guaranteed a set amount each month and that is included in the budget. Any additional monies are dependent on the amount of advertising sold.

Mr. Licata added that we are getting more than the guarantee.

13. New Business

Dr. Kepner mentioned that Kings College is having their annual Kings Earth Day on April 24th from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. It was asked if L.C.T.A. could man a table as done in previous years and Mr. Henderson agreed. Mr. Strelish also suggested the possibility of having a 29- ft. hybrid bus at the festivities.

14. Remarks:

Linda Slater remarked that she heard the buses would be able to pull in and out straight in the intermodal. She continued to say the intermodal was built by the City of Wilkes-Barre and that they wanted the L.C.T.A. buses off the streets. She asked why the City of Wilkes-Barre isn't responsible for the spotters and safety.

Mr. Strelish remarked a study was done and the most feasible is putting four buses on S. Washington Street. This would be a safer situation. Wilkes-Barre, however does not want the buses on Washington

Street or any of the streets. He said that it would be a one-time cost for the solution with only minor modifications to the intermodal.

Mr. Chepalonis noted that the original design was always for the buses to back out. It was assumed that the passengers would use the crosswalk but they do not.

Amanda, from the PTAC Committee asked why there was money to hire spotters but they were cutting bus service. Dr. Kepner explained that the service was not being cut, just re-arranged.

Mr. Licata explained that the spotters would cost approximately \$150,000-\$200,000 and the bus service would cost millions. He also stated the board is trying to address the issue as best they can.

Robert and Amanda also mentioned that Martz security will throw out anyone that has been in the waiting area for 45 minutes even if they are waiting for someone. Mr. Chepalonis remarked that it is to deter loitering and to let security know when your next bus is coming.

Lastly, Rich McNeil, president of the Safety Committee expressed his concern about protecting passengers and drivers at the intermodal. Board Chairman, Mr. Licata, said that the board agrees and the spotters will be there.

15. Adjournment:

With all business having been completed a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Conway and seconded by Dr. Koch. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

BY: Tracy Kline, Secretary to the Board
FOR: Rosemary Lombardo, Secretary of the Board